

4

U N I T E

OR

F A L L.

by the Earl of Carlisle.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. WRIGHT,
OPPOSITE OLD BOND STREET, PICCADILLY.

1798.

(Price 6d. or twelve for 4s. 6d.)

UNITED STATES

GREAT BRITAIN
The Government of Great Britain
has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of
the letter of the 10th inst. from the
Minister of the United States at London
in relation to the subject of the
treaty of commerce and navigation
between the United States and Great Britain
and to inform you that the same has been
forwarded to the proper authorities for their
consideration.

UNITE OR FALL.

GREAT Industry having been employed to persuade the people of England, that the present war could, by better management, have been avoided, and an additional weight of uneasiness being thus laid on the public mind, easily irritated under the pressure of heavy taxes, however evidently imposed for the general preservation, it shall be my endeavour to show, *that the War from the beginning was unavoidable ; that we were not the original aggressors ; that no ministers could have kept upon terms of friendship with France, without injury to their country ; and that peace, notwithstanding two attempts on the part of Great*

B 2

Britain

Britain to procure it, has hitherto been unattainable. The vexation therefore just alluded to ought not only to be dismissed as groundless, but also as highly mischievous at this moment, in as much as it tends to weaken that exertion, which, resulting from *union* establishes our security; but which, if pallied by party accusations, and unfounded clamours, so calculated to sow division, would almost justify the enemy in his wildest projects to destroy us.

The first point then for consideration, is, whether there is any ground for the opinion which some persons have propagated, that it was practicable to have kept out of the war, by preserving, [to use their own phrase] *a dignified Neutrality.*

It must be remarked, that the obligations we were under to support our Allies when attacked made it somewhat difficult to turn to this notable expedient: for, unfortunately, one of our Allies was wantonly attacked by France, and the only contrivance

trivance we could use to escape from so inconvenient an engagement was indeed a simple one; viz. to break it. But the advocates for this *dignified Neutrality*, men so prodigal of the national honour, so lavish of its good faith, so much concerned for its dignity, ought, I apprehend, to be able to show that we consulted at least *our interest*, when we called in the aid of this flexible morality, to extricate ourselves from the performance of our promises solemnly made to Holland.

Another circumstance occurred, which, if not sufficiently strong, according to the ideas of some politicians, to place arms in our hands, was sufficiently alarming to make it prudent to have them within our reach. This was a certain declared offer of France, addressed to all nations who had a wish to change their form of Government, engaging to afford them every assistance to effect that change. I am sensible it was said, and I dare say will be repeated, that such a rodomontade declaration should have effected us but

slightly, and had better been met by the pride of contemptuous silence. This conduct might have possibly been as dignified as the neutrality so much recommended; but it cannot be forgotten, that we were advised thus to treat this outrageous declaration, at the very moment when the enemies of this, and I conceive of all Governments, did appear a little more out of their hiding places than they think it safe for them to do at present; when every art was employed to mislead the understanding of the people; when a most alarming panic had seized upon the best friends to order, and established rule; when the sea was open every tide to waft over more ingenious and more powerful spreaders of Revolutionary poison, and when we had not that Bulwark of safety to resort to, the power of circumventing these contrivers of our ruin by the operation of the Alien Bill. When all this is recollected, one may at least be permitted to doubt the wise policy of endeavouring to entrench ourselves upon this dignified neutrality, a position of honour
which

which was to be gained by an avowed infraction of solemn compacts into which we had entered; a bright station claiming reverence and admiration; ascended to by the grossest perfidy, and desertion of our friends.

But grant that, under all these circumstances, we had yielded to the advice of those who would have endeavoured to have kept out of the war. On the one hand we have their assurances that this conduct would have insured our ease and safety; but alas! on the other we have the example of America, to prove how visionary was such an expectation.

America, not the standing object, like Great Britain, which France, ever since the unforgiven peace of Lord Chatham, had directed all her ability to injure and degrade, feeling the full value of peace, and knowing how peculiarly necessary was the continuance of that blessing to the rapid progress she was hourly making to opulence and

consequence ; not thinking she was included (being not a Monarchical State) in that astonishing promise of aid above mentioned ; under no difficulty as to treaties with the neighbouring nations of the French Republic ; America, I say, took no part in the disputes of Europe, but anchored herself upon the plain and strong ground of performing her duties to the rest of the world, under the just and admitted explanation of the law of nations.

We are now to examine whether this mild and equitable conduct did preserve her from intolerable insult and oppression, or whether it will in the end secure her from war.

Long before the rupture between France and England, the whole industry of France was employed to bring America into her hostile views against this country ; to force her out of her pacific system, and to make common cause with the Republic. When
America

America presumed to persevere in that system apparently most conducive to her interest, and, in her judgment, most applicable to her condition, she was insultingly told by the French agents, that her Government did not comprehend her real situation; and a menace was actually made by Monsieur Genet to appeal from that established Government to the people at large; and, in fact, the whole tenour of that Minister's instructions, as published by himself in 1793, was to effect a union of force with the Republic, in her operations against Great Britain.

This man's insolence went to the height of threatening to make a formal complaint against the president for refusing to convene congress at his instance. Every art was used by him and his successor, to drive the Americans from their neutrality, upbraiding them, in the most offensive terms, with their ingratitude to those, who, these agents most haughtily, but falsely asserted, had

conferred independence upon the United States ; treating with derision all obligations to other nations, " growing," to use their own words, " out of the worm-eaten " volumes of Grotius and Puffendorf," and not out of the new enlightening system of reason and justice ; of which reason and justice, it is curious to observe, France reserved to herself the sole right of judging.

America, still feeling all the consequence of peace, was calm and temperate in her remonstrances against this outrageous treatment ; but, at the same time, gave France no hope that she would make over to her the right or power of deciding upon her essential interests. France, to the greatest degree exasperated and disappointed that she could not make America the dupe of her designs, and minister to her revenge against Great Britain, has actually made the threatened appeal to the people against the Government, declared the treaty between the two countries at an end, permitted her ships to plunder those of the
United

United States; sent away the American Minister, and has told that country, when it shall restore its Government to its *true principles* (France again being the sole judge) it shall be suffered to return to its former condition of friend and ally.

As for those amongst us who still contend that Great Britain was the aggressor in the war, and who insinuate that, had their advice been listened to, peace would not have been interrupted, they must (in candour I suppose it) have been unacquainted with the facts now exposed, as well as with some others even more necessary to be observed upon.

Whoever turns to the reasons assigned by France for declaring war against Austria, will be convinced, that none of those reasons really actuated her to adopt hostile measures, but that her conduct on that occasion made part of that system avowed by so many, and so happily explained by the celebrated Brissot and Camille Desmoulins.

One of these worthies declares, that "*We (the French) must set fire to the four corners of the world ;*" the other, that to "*disorganize Europe was one of the sublime vocations of the Convention.*" But if this truth appears not upon the face of the published manifestoes, the Brissotine party in the Convention, charge it to the king as a crime, his reluctance to fall upon Austria, and ever afterwards take the credit to themselves of having forced him to that measure.

In regard to England, the question of aggression is still, if possible, more clear.

It was made a regular charge against Brissot, at his trial, that he unnecessarily occasioned a rupture between France and England. He denies that he was the individual promoter of the war, but maintains that Robespierre was the sole author of it. Would it not have served his justification as well, to have shewn, had that been possible, that England was the aggressor?

Every

Every body can recollect, it was in Jan. 1793, that Monsieur Chauvelin was ordered to depart this country, and how much ground of accusation and blame was afforded to the opposers of the war, in consequence of that step taken by his Majesty's Ministers. But it is a curious fact, that so early as 1792, the Convention had ordered a formidable naval equipment, with the avowed expectation of a war with the maritime powers. What maritime powers, the reader will determine. But what is more important, when we are blamed for not having been lulled by M. Chauvelin's pacific assurances, *the instructions had actually been signed at Paris*, nine days before his departure from this country, and transmitted to Mr. Genet, the French agent in America, ordering him to move heaven and earth to engage America against Great Britain, to break her treaty, to set aside all restrictions under the Law of nations, to compel Great Britain to relinquish rights, which America had repeatedly acknowledged

Great

Great Britain, according to that law, to possess, and which could only have been done by appealing to the sword ; to which point France most ardently wished to drive her.*

There are those who still catch at every thing that supports for a moment a censure of Administration, though the next moment should detect its fallacy, and who, therefore, rest upon the *declarations* of France, and not upon her *actions*. And, which is more whimsical, when declaration is at variance with declaration, they incline to that which corresponds the least with the system which

* If the reader wishes fuller information on points relating to America, he is desired to peruse Mr. Harper's very able pamphlet; in which he will find many of the facts and transactions, here briefly noticed, amply and much more satisfactorily stated. The writer would not have presumed to have compressed those facts and transactions, already exhibited to such great advantage, had he not been apprehensive, that the size of that pamphlet, and its subject matter not *appearing* to relate particularly to Great Britain, might have impeded the circulation of much useful information to Englishmen, as well as Americans.

is evidently to be traced through all her conduct. For instance, the Convention makes an unqualified offer of aid *to all* who are willing to alter their forms of Government. When England takes alarm at this, it again declares, it has no intention to disturb fixed governments, but offers assistance, when a whole people shall call for assistance ; as if a whole people could require any. But this second declaration better accommodates some persons, though they know a correspondence was actually held between the Revolutionists of France, and a part (thank God, a small part) of his Majesty's subjects ; that open encouragement was held out to this small part ; and that persons acting as deputies, had formal audiences of the French Convention. Yet we are to accept the second declaration, that nothing was more remote from their wishes or designs than to disturb settled Governments.

If the opposers of the war had contented themselves with stating how little the precise

cise moment, in which Great Britain commenced hostilities, was suitable to the views of France, and that the infraction of the peace, at that instant, was by her neither desired nor expected, they would doubtless be nearer the truth; but this would have afforded no ground for those incessant railings about the wanton cruelty and inexpediency of the war.

France had then certainly upon her hands more than she seemed equal to manage: for, breaking with the neighbouring continental powers, it would, no doubt, have been very convenient to her, had we slept till she could have been less engaged, and prepared to turn to us with more certainty of injuring, if not destroying us; till she could have put her marine in a better condition, by tempting back the emigrant captains of her navy, the loss of whom she most severely felt; till she had made some impression against us with America; till, by breaking through all our treaties, we should have been found without a friend; till the seeds of
anarchy

anarchy and confusion, dispersed by her kind hand, should have promised an immediate harvest ; and, lastly, till, through fear of giving offence, and of diminishing the advantages of our *dignified neutrality*, we should have been found totally unprepared for resistance.

But we shall be told, that the intended neutrality would have secured the country from any hostile attempts of France, as it was not incompatible with preparation for defence. To this I answer, such preparation would have been *war* ; or, to avoid it, a submission to an order to *desist*. America, not the object of her long and constant jealousy, cannot, with all its temperate efforts, keep up, with that domineering power, the relations of amity, without submitting to its will, or being dictated to as to a conquered province.

What hope could we have rationally entertained, of warding off, beyond a short period, the effects of that vengeance, which
is

is to be so clearly discovered in every part of Monsieur Genet's instructions ; a vengeance, the gratification of which, ever since the peace of 1763, has been the declared and ruling passion of France. A little delay of the meditated blow might perhaps, have been purchased by an humiliating avowal and manifestation of perfect weakness ; and, in that case, it would have become a fair speculation of the French Republic, whether or not the unresisted power of revolutionary principles, making their steady way through the country, might not altogether have prevented the trouble of employing an army or a navy to complete the work.

If little doubt remains as to the point of aggression, still less will attend the examination, " which power was resolved to continue, which to terminate the contest."

The temperate and able conduct of Lord Malmesbury under his instructions,
brought

brought this country and the French Republic, in both negociations, before the great tribunal of the world, in order to its decision, which nation was sincere in its attempts at peace, and which was systematically bent on war. In the first instance, France, baffled at every turn by an evident and prompt acquiescence on our part, to meet her upon any reasonable ground of discussion and arrangement, was reduced to the extravagance of demanding to know the whole extent of Lord Malmesbury's powers, the ultimatum, the points upon which he was to insist, and those upon which, under certain circumstances, he might relax. This unprecedented inspection was claimed, without the offer on their part of a shadow of similar information. This advantage in the negociation was to be balanced by no reciprocal benefit; and it would be affronting to common sense to suppose that a demand so outrageous, so contrary to all the usages of civilized nations, could have been made, but for the purpose of being rejected. The wolf
in

in the fable was not more put to it for excuses for eating the lamb, than France was, to break off the negotiation, nor betrayed a clearer determination, how the business should end.

The second attempt at Lisle, seemed to commence under better auspices. There were certainly at that time in France, persons of weight and authority, who felt the mutual advantage which both countries could not fail to derive from the reestablishment of peace. The reward of this humane sentiment, was an immediate banishment without trial, to the unwholesome regions of Cayenne. With the expulsion of Monsieur Barthelemon, &c. the hope of restoring the public tranquility was much abated. But still the temperate conduct of Great Britain again made the whole world competent to decide upon the sincerity and real views of both nations. Again might the conduct of France be exemplified by the same fable. Finding no other expedient to break off the negotiation,

tion, she bluntly asked for a surrender, on our part, of all our conquests. What was to be the return from *her*?—Nothing. But when asked, if such a surrender were possible, would that be *peace*? the answer was *No*: we merely accept this preliminary as a basis, from which to rise to topics of the most serious importance. So that the reasonableness of a surrender of all we had gained was to a degree to be admitted, to purchase the permission of advancing to points of important discussion; and the consequence of breaking off upon those subsequent topics, (which probably would have been the case, from the disposition manifested by the Directory) would have been embarrassing the future approach to peace with the avowal, that the demand of the surrender alluded to, had been admitted as a basis of negotiation.

From the above premises, the following deductions appear naturally to flow:

That

That, by the confession of France herself, she was the aggressor in the war ;

That, with all our care, and debasing ourselves to the utmost, by the endurance of insults as difficult to submit to as those offered to America, all we were likely to have obtained, would have been some suspension of our fate, or as Dr. Swift expresses it, " the humble favour of being " last devoured ;"

And that, in both attempts made to restore peace, France has evinced, in the clearest manner, her determined resolution to continue the war.

Under this conviction, what have we to do, but to avoid spending our time in unprofitable talk, and to unite in one solid and general system of defence. It is true, there has been in this conflict, a great expenditure of public treasure. It is also true, and it is a more lamentable truth, that there
has

has been a sad effusion of human blood. But we have still a Constitution to protect, which has hitherto, with all its alledged imperfections, bestowed more happiness and real liberty, than ever an indulgent Providence has elsewhere permitted men to enjoy.—We are still in possession of our property : we do not despair that this property will reach our children.—We have a King upon the Throne, who, from the day he was seated there to this moment, has enjoyed and merited the confidence and love of his people : we will not suffer Him without a struggle, to be driven from it.—We have still the Altar of our Religion to resort to, unpolluted by the blood of its priests : we will not tamely see it cast down, and trampled on ; nor will we procure a momentary pause to our sufferings in this world, by embracing ATHEISM and abjuring our God.

THE END.

has been a sad effusion of human blood.
 That we have still a Constitution to protect,
 which has hitherto, with all its alleged
 imperfections, defended our liberties
 and real liberty, than ever an indulgent
 Providence has allowed to be
 to enjoy. — We are still in possession of our
 property: we do not desire that it be
 party will reach our children. — We have
 a King upon the Throne, who, from the day
 he was seated there, to the present hour, has
 joyed and merited the confidence and love
 of his people: we will not suffer him to
 out a single day from his throne. — We
 have still the American flag to rally
 to, unpolled by the blood of its knights:
 we will not suffer it to fall down, and
 trampled on; nor will we procure a suc-
 cessary name to our banners in this
 world, by sacrificing American blood to
 ing our God.

